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THE DAYS  
IN  
PARADISE  
—  
PEARSON.

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THE  
DAYS IN PARADISE:

IN

Six Lectures.



BY THE

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PRACTICAL," ETC.

---

Thrice happy men  
And sons of men, whom God hath thus advanced!  
Created in his image there to dwell  
And worship him.

Thrice happy, if they know  
Their happiness, and persevere upright.

PARADISE LOST.

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## PREFACE.

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IT is with mingled feelings that we dwell upon The Days in Paradise. Of deep interest are the events which cluster round the cradle of mankind ; yet of an interest not less melancholy than joyous. How it gladdens us to think of our first parents, when radiant and unsullied was the Creator's image in them ; when their hearts beat in perfect unison with the Divine will, and all around them was peaceful and redolent of heaven. To picture them to ourselves, as they were originally, adorned

with such mental and bodily excellencies as rendered them worthy of angelic companionship, and to trace their early footsteps in the garden of Eden, is a delightful, and should be a profitable, employment. But sad, instead of delightful, though not less profitable is it to contemplate the reverse of this picture. We behold these godlike creatures despoiled, as in a moment, of their grand distinctions; overwhelmed with guilt and shame and horror; judged and sentenced by their Father; dispossessed of their blissful home in Paradise; and doomed to conclude a life, henceforth to be one of toil and anguish, by returning, sooner or later, “dust to dust.” And then to reflect that *we*, who should have inherited the happy effects of their sustained innocence, are partakers now of their loss, disgrace, and ruin! Insupportable would such reflec-

tions be were it not for the consolatory assurance, which is indeed the marrow of the Gospel, that “as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive :”—that, “as sin hath reigned unto death” through the transgression of our first parent, “even so [doth] grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.”

It is the Writer’s earnest hope that his readers may lay to heart these affecting considerations. And when “the darkness of this world” gathers over them, like the shadow of death, let them raise the eye of faith to that beaming prophecy, which assures us that, after the Gospel shall have accomplished its primary aim, the best days of Paradise will return, or still better and brighter days. For solemnly pledged is the Author of all things to “make all things new ;”—to restore in full his fa-

therly blessing to this curse-stricken earth ; to reinstate man, but more securely than aforetime, in “ life and immortality ;” and to reproduce that Paradise both spiritual and material, of which our feeble conceptions are so ravishing ; ay, to make “ new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”

“ The world shall burn, and from her ashes spring  
New heaven and earth, wherein the just shall  
dwell,  
And, after all their tribulations long,  
See golden days fruitful of golden deeds,  
With joy and love triumphing, and fair truth.”

Should these Lectures assist serious students in their meditation on this great subject, by presenting it as the key of God’s subsequent dispensations to mankind, the Author will be satisfied and thankful. He is aware that in so slight a sketch very

much important matter is quite omitted, or produced in outline merely, and that outline a faint one. But it was not his ambition to collect whatever has been conjectured, or reasoned out, on the question of man's primal estate, and of the Lord's dealings with him in the three great stages of his existence, so quickly traversed,—of holiness, of debasement, and of incipient redemption. His object will be gained, should his readers be aided by these cursory hints to expand for themselves, into something like its due proportions, the document we possess of man's origin, his earliest position and circumstances,—points to which an unspeakable interest attaches. Not, however, in the mere spirit of literary inquisitiveness should such investigations be pursued, but with a devout craving to have those doctrines

written upon the heart, which are involved in the facts our Bible records, and which constitute the groundwork and the substance of religion.

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## LECTURE I.

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### THE DAYS IN PARADISE.

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GENESIS II. 8.

"And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed."

OUR purpose is to contemplate the Parents of the human race, their condition, and the events that befel them during the period of their abode in Paradise. We can take but a superficial glance of this large subject. We can touch but the summits of the mountains in our rapid flight, leaving most of the valleys between them, if not unvisited, yet unexplored. Still I hope that even this transient peep at the cradle of mankind,—this inquiry, however limited

and imperfect, into those primordial facts, of which the history of man throughout all subsequent ages is the sequel and development,—will not be without interest to religious and thoughtful minds. May the Lord enable us to enter upon and follow up this subject, not in a temper of curious criticism, which I neither can, nor shall attempt to, gratify, but in that spirit of sober yet devout meditation which I would gladly awaken and cherish!

Carry back your thoughts nearly six thousand years to the close of the sixth day of creation. The formless mass of earth and water, which had been created it is probable very long before, had been shaped by the Creator's almighty hand into this beautiful world. Light now encompassed it "as a garment." The dry land was divided from the sea by an impassable barrier. Two great lights had been kindled in the firmament of heaven to rule, the greater one the day, and the lesser one the night. Over mountains and

plains was the richest herbage spread, with trees and shrubs of every kind ; and earth and air and sea were peopled with their various inhabitants, with all that walks, or creeps, or flies, or swims. One creature only was yet wanting to complete God's purposed work, and that creature was man.

From the manner in which this last act of creative power is introduced, it appears to have been something of transcendently higher importance in the Divine estimation than any previous acts. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." By the Church it has been constantly held that the doctrine of the Trinity, that is, of three subsistences, each one possessing the whole Divine nature, is enveloped in the phrase, "Let us make man." And this judgment is strongly confirmed by the expression of the Lord God, recorded in the third chapter of this book, "Behold, the man is become as *one of us.*"

Now this representation, however figura-

tive it may be, of the Divine Triad concerting and co-operating, so to say, for the production of man, intimates of how much higher mark and degree he was destined to be than any of the earthly creatures already brought into existence. It may also be affirmed, with our present knowledge of the course he has run, of the Divine proceedings towards him, and of his wonderful destinies, that the manner in which he was to become a means of displaying "unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places" the "manifold wisdom" and goodness of God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, constituted a palpable reason for introducing him to the front rank of creation with a solemnity so mysterious and impressive.

"Let us make man." This seems to refer to his bodily frame. And what was that frame, whence derived, and how composed? "Dust of the ground." Here is something to check our pride, and cast it back into the mire, if we have been lifted

up by the view just presented of man's singular distinction. Yes, this body of ours, of which many are so vain, and which is indeed a masterpiece of God's excellent skill for beauty, strength, activity, for the elaborate contrivance of its outward and inward machinery, and in respect of its vital energy and reproductive power, this body was fashioned of the clay we tread upon! It is of the same gross material with that of grazing oxen and crawling worms. Yet I remark a difference in the account of how the one and the other were created. For when beasts and cattle were to have a beginning, God said, "Let the earth bring them forth." He did not condescend, so to say, to put his own master hand to the work. But when man,—a being of that nature which his own adorable Son was one day to assume,—when man is coming into existence, it is said that *God formed him*. The Almighty sets himself to the process, like a potter to the clay, as if this were an extraordinary work-

manship, on which He would spend his personal intelligence and labour, to make it superlatively *good*, a paragon of art and beauty.

The body is made, and forthwith God breathes into it the breath of life, and man becomes a living soul. And here I would advert to another notable difference of the human kind from all others in its creation. When birds and beasts were made, they existed at once in all the perfection they should ever possess. They came forth out of earth's spacious womb, moving and living creatures. The whole animal had a material origin, was "of the earth, earthy." But the production of man, being a vastly greater affair, is the business of two, if not three, distinct stages. First the material vehicle is compacted, mere organized clay, senseless and lifeless. The man does not yet exist, though his body does. But God comes, and breathes into that body "the breath of life," and instantly Adam rises up the noblest of the animals on which

wondering angels gaze. I am prone, however, to believe that this second process was the infusion of animal life only, and that a third process, described as that whereby "man became a living soul," was what elevated him immensely above all other parts of the creation, being the communication of such intellectual and moral faculties as rendered him, not indeed equal to, yet only "a little lower than, the angels."

Nor yet were it discreet to affirm that, in respect only of his rationality and moral nature, did man reflect the Divine image. Even in his bodily form there may have been something akin to those manifestations of himself, by which God had been accustomed to converse with intelligent creatures, who frequented, antecedently to man, what is now this globe. We know that our heavenly Lord used to show himself in a human form to the patriarchs, long before He was really "made flesh." Accordingly there may be a propriety in the expression, that man is made "in the

image of God," with respect even to his corporal shape and mien. But we hazard no rash conjectures. Only one other property I would add to those of understanding and conscience, as constituting an undoubted likeness to the Deity,—and that is immortality. "The breath of life," the vivifying principle, which was infused into the organized dust that God had formed to be its vehicle, was surely one of the noble distinctions, as not being liable to extinction, by which Adam claimed to be a son resembling his Father. God's own spirit, the spirit of life, was in him.

Reflect sometimes, my friends, on your original make and constitution. You are creatures of the dust, and cannot be too thoughtful of "the hole of the pit whence ye are digged," when apt to let your bosoms swell with self-sufficiency and arrogance. The instant God withdraws the breath that makes you animated beings, what do you become? Those bodies die, and moulder away, and perish. Still, remember the

lofty origin of your immortal spirits, and that by virtue specially of them you are to resemble God himself. You are to resemble Him, not only in being *intellectual*, and governing yourselves by that light of reason which He has imparted to you, but in walking before Him as *moral* creatures, whose true glory consists in the nearest conformity they can attain to his perfections, "in righteousness and true holiness." Strive after this with earnest prayer ; and then both body and soul shall be wondrously improved hereafter, being assimilated to Christ's, our exalted Redeemer, who is "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person."

After man's creation some interval may have elapsed before the first of God's recorded dealings by him took place. Apparently he was made in the land of Eden, but not in that part of it subsequently converted into Paradise, which means an enclosed garden. Many revelations we may presume to have been made

to Adam, while he was alone ;—alone, that is to say, except with God and holy angels. Can we doubt that he was instructed in religion and religious duties, perhaps by the mouth of the future Redeemer himself ; was trained to know, and revere, and love his Maker ; to admire with an understanding heart the works of God's matchless hand, and to rejoice in his own position and prospects ? And, if he were to praise God vocally, which it seems impossible to question (for what is there so excellent as the faculty of speech, not to mention that words are essential to the exercise of reason), then God, we must believe, taught him language. How else should he acquire it ? And that he did possess it, ere yet an equal fellow-creature had been given him to converse with, is a fact involved in the Scriptural statement, that God brought before him, while he was yet single, every beast of the field and every fowl of the air, that he might put a name upon the several species.

Adam's heavenly Father, then, did in some sort become his schoolmaster, and taught him to speak, though whether by sudden inspiration or a gradual process we cannot determine. He may, however, be confidently assumed to have been in the perfect exercise of this endowment, when first brought into Paradise, since there the Supreme is found immediately conversing with him. "And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat ; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it ; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

Adam is now instated in Paradise, a region of abundance and delights, filled by God's paternal bounty not only with every tree that was "good for food," but also with every one that was "pleasant to the sight." Truly our God is not of narrow beneficence.

In Him perfect love moves infinite power ; and, blessed in himself, He “gives us all things richly to enjoy.” But He acts wisely, and governs man conformably to man’s nature. Adam is not appointed to lead a perfectly idle life. This would have been in nowise for his happiness. It would not have satisfied the active principles of his nature. And, although I cannot doubt that he was far better able than are we his fallen offspring to serve his Maker in prayers and praises without wearying, still some change of occupation, some descent to lower objects, some busying of himself with earthly things, would be suitable and requisite. Consequently he is set to “dress” and “keep” the garden. No thorns and tistles had he then to extirpate. No labour was required that would cause his brow to sweat. There was imposed upon him only such a measure of easy husbandry as would prove wholesome and grateful to body and mind alike.

Moreover, the importance of this appoint-

ment, in respect of Adam's probationary state, deserves attention. There was one tree designed for a test of his dutifulness, a central, conspicuous tree, affluent of fruit, and of alluring colour and fragrance, from which he was commanded to abstain. To this remarkable prohibition I now advert only for the purpose of observing that, under these circumstances, it was graciously ordered that Adam should have occupation enough, to prevent his listening, with a mind unstrung by indolence and self-indulgence, to the glozing speeches of a tempter, should any such be able to approach him. For certain it is that Satan is far more successful in assaulting the idle than the diligent soul. Most certain is it, that a house "swept and garnished,"—a bosom empty of those lively cogitations which the proper business of the world begets,—is not usually the most secure against the invasion of unclean spirits ; is not that wherein the Holy Ghost finds the best field for the implanting and the culture of Christian graces.

Whether or not the law of the Sabbath had been declared before Adam had a wife to observe it with him, is uncertain. It seems probable, indeed, provided time enough intervened,—which I incline to think was the case,—between the production of the man and the woman, that Adam did in his solitude keep holy the day on which God rested from his works ; if not rather in company with that heavenly host, his frequent visitants I ween, who celebrated the original Sabbath with tuneful symphonies, and burst forth in the exuberance of their wonderment and joy into jubilant shoutings.

Adam had, beyond dispute, a magnificent range for his learned, imaginative, and devout speculations. The star-embossed canopy over his head, and the flowery carpet his feet trod upon, with all the various existences around him,—the stainless garniture of a world, upon which that eye in whose sight scarce the heavens appear clean, could dwell complacently,—all this

might well furnish Adam's soul with a banquet that could never cloy. Still, the all-wise Creator judged it undesirable for him to be alone ; ay, though foreseeing that his future partner would beguile him into sin. Still it was "not good for man to be alone." His nature craved some companion of kindred mould, and faculties, and sentiments. And possibly to remain without such a companion might have wrought him greater harm, than to have one through whose infirmity and charm he should lose his first high estate. Neither is there any ground for assuming that Adam would have stood firm, had *he* instead of Eve been assailed by the serpent. Besides, it was God's plan to have not one earthly child alone, but a continuous race of sons and daughters from that primitive stock, and thus to open a field for the exercise of social charities and virtues. He meant, moreover, to glorify himself pre-eminently after, and even by, permitting sin to enter into the world through the weakness of

the original pair, and to contaminate all their descendants. He meant to show the greatness of his power and love in the redemption of a fallen world, of power and love more stupendous than were displayed in the creation. He meant to entitle man,—not a single individual, but “numbers without number,”—to a deathless existence; and that not in a terrestrial paradise, and as a recompense of his own persevering obedience, but in a heavenly paradise, and as the meed and fruit of a Divine Redeemer’s obedience unto death. Such was God’s sublime and most gracious purpose; and in order to its accomplishment, it behoved not “that the man should be alone.”

## LECTURE II.

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### THE DAYS IN PARADISE.

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GENESIS ii. 23.

"And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh ; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man."

ALMIGHTY GOD, after creating man, and placing him in Paradise, the garden of delights, had himself pronounced that it was "not good that the man should be alone." It was desirable that he should have a companion "meet for (*i. e.* adapted to) him ;" one of the same nature with himself, yet with a wisely contrived diversity of bodily and mental qualities. In the judgment of Him who could not err this was expedient,

for the developement of man's character, for the exercise of his virtues, and for the enlargement of his happiness. And as it was the purpose of the great Creator that his own name should be known, and his mighty deeds admired or extolled, not by one solitary mind and one adoring voice, but by numerous and successive worshippers,—a host that should eventually cover the earth for we know not how many ages yet to run,—so it also seemed good to Him that these worshippers should be linked together by the closest relationship. He might have given existence to human creatures, as He did to the first man, by constructing each individual of a distinct portion of clay. But far better calculated was his plan to keep them mindful that they were “members one of another,” flesh of the same flesh, and bone of the same bone, and thus to interweave them by the strictest fellowship, the liveliest sympathies, and a multitude of indescribably beneficial reciprocations, to the end “that there should be no schism in the

body." Ah, why do we not more practically remember that, being man *of* man, we are brothers ?

The whole human race then was to proceed from Adam's loins. He was to be the procreant stem whence innumerable branches should issue, overspreading the globe by consecutive generations. Not, however, Adam alone, not Adam by himself, was to be the parent stock of such a wondrous progeny ; but Adam together with that helpmate which was about to be given him, and by virtue of the marriage union. The manner in which this new production of God's creative bounty, this last and most beautiful specimen of his exquisite skill, was ushered into the world will now claim attentive notice.

Adam was cast by God's special operation into a deep sleep or trance. While he lay in that insensible state, God "took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof." The abstracted rib He then fashioned into a woman,—a *manness*, or

female man, as the Hebrew accurately expresses it,—into a creature closely resembling the man in its essential characteristics, but different in sex. This work accomplished, Adam is roused from his preternatural slumber ; and lo ! the beneficent Maker brings near and presents to him this fair creature, the recent birth of his own body, but destined henceforth to be the partner of his days, and the mother of his children ; to bring into play his dormant sensibilities ; to share his pleasant labours ; to elicit his social excellencies ; to stimulate his powers ; to assist his counsels ; to interchange the best products of heart and mind ; to unite with him in prayer and praise, and the contemplation of all visible things ; to go with him step by step in his intellectual and spiritual ascent ; to be the object, after God, and the chaste reward, of his holiest affections ; to be a fruit-bearing tree in his happy bower, a fountain of joy in the paradise of his bosom. With such benevolent purpose was woman be-

stowed upon man ; and we know where lies the blame if that purpose has not been fully realised.

We remarked before that God, having moulded the woman out of one of Adam's ribs, yet not in his presence, then "brought her unto him." The circumstance of her being made later than the man constitutes a certain inferiority, not of nature indeed but of order, and intimates the Divine purpose, that her state should be one of subjection to her husband,—"subjection, (as the almost divine Milton beautifully puts it) but required with gentle sway." And St. Paul inculcates the same lesson on the same ground : "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection, for Adam was first formed, then Eve." And in another place, he alleges the following reason for the subordination of the woman : "For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man ;" a step below him, that is, inasmuch as from him she is derived. No wise person will regret that,

when God determined that the world should be parcelled into families, He assigned the chief authority to one of the parents, which one He endowed superiorly with governing qualities. Too often there is more than a little discord even now,—such is the thorny produce of our depraved nature,—among the members of one household. But what would have been the case, had no pre-eminence been allotted to either husband or wife by God's word, and by the moral and physical structure of one of the parties ? The consequences would beyond a doubt have been disastrous.

It is obvious, that in God's bringing and presenting the first woman to the first man we gaze upon a solemn transaction. The rib, when “ builded ” into a woman (as the marginal reading has it), was no longer Adam's property. God had supplied the vacancy made with flesh. But now it is restored to him, a living beauteous creature, the softer image of himself, as a singular proof of his Maker's bounty ; a sacred

gift, to be received not with selfish pleasure only, but with religious reverence. In the earth not yet injured by sin, we behold a majestic and undefiled temple; and in this temple did the Creator himself deign to act as Priest, and to unite the first man with the first woman. What sacred nuptials were these, over which the most august of beings presided! Surely that institution ought never to be degraded into a merely civil rite, which the holiest One has sanctified in so extraordinary a manner, by himself officiating (if that word may be permitted) at the primal marriage, and joining together our first parents with his law and his blessing.

We proceed to the remarkable speech of Adam, on receiving his bride from the Lord. "And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman (*Isha* in the margin), because she was taken out of man (*Ish*). Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and cleave unto

his wife ; and they shall be one flesh.” Now in the fact that Jesus Christ, in citing the last of these sentences, ascribes it to the mouth of God, there is undeniable proof that Adam, when uttering them, spake by inspiration of the Holy Ghost. But, independently of this proof, we find internal evidence, on comparing this declaration with what time has shown to be the exact truth,—which truth however, then lay hid in the bosom of unborn events,—that Adam’s utterance was prophetic. He could by no possibility have anticipated what he gave out with such oracular majesty, had it not been revealed to him by that only Being who contemplates the end from the beginning. On this feature of the subject I must detain you a few minutes, because it furnishes striking evidence of the inspiration of the Bible.

Now observe, that however unconscious at the time of God’s hand being upon him to abstract a part of his body, and notwithstanding the loss had been so fully re-

paired that neither wound nor scar was seen, yet no sooner does Adam set eyes upon the woman, led up to him of God, than he speaks as one perfectly aware of the recent transaction. He forthwith recognizes the graceful creature consigned to his tenderness, as a part of his own substance, and in a manner one with himself. After which he puts a name upon her, significant of her intimate relationship to him, and of the identity of their nature. If before he had given names to the inferior animals, to denote his dominion over them, they being intended for his service, he now fixes one upon the co-equal creature God has granted to his embrace, to signify the endeared union that should always subsist between them, since she who was henceforth to lie in his bosom had been taken out of it.

Are you not struck with the acute insight which the eldest of men discovers into relations not yet existing ? What knew he, or rather whence did he obtain his prospec-

tive knowledge, of the ties between parents and children,—he that had never himself been either a son or a parent ? How came he by such distinct ideas of father and mother, before there was any such condition in the world ? Already he seems perfectly aware how powerful the reciprocal attachment would be of parents and their offspring. Yet this he presages will yield to that stronger instinct on which the conjugal union is founded. Such will be the endearments springing from wedlock, as to overpower the yearnings of a son to his early home, his father's smile, and his mother's kiss ; and he will freely abandon blessings he would forego for nothing else, in order to attach himself to a stranger, who shall henceforth be to him instead of father, and mother, and sister, and brother, and birth-place.

Nor is this all, for Adam is able to predict that a man shall “*cleave unto*” the wife he has taken ; ay, so cleave to her, that “they twain shall be” in a manner “one flesh.”

Now this, if a figurative, is yet a perfectly just account of the indissoluble character of the marriage union, and the sentiments engendered by it where the mind is not depraved. So great is the reluctance of persons joined in matrimony to be afterwards divided, that a separation cannot be effected without sad violence to their feelings ; and where this principle of affection is weaker than could be desired, still the tie of common children is powerfully binding. Now these principles, which should operate to hinder those from parting who had been coupled in marriage, to the extent of constituting them in a manner "one flesh," must have been made known to Adam by God. For though Adam knew that he and his bride were literally one flesh, yet he knew that future wives would not be formed in the same manner that his was, nor have the same extraordinary claim on the husband's intense and undying tenderness. In pronouncing, therefore, that a matrimonial union would continue so

strong and sacred as to justify speaking of the wedded parties as “one flesh,” our first father must have been supernaturally enlightened.

Furthermore it is observable, that he contemplates the nuptial bond as subsisting between two individuals only, one man and one woman. Polygamy is virtually denounced. But how was Adam to foresee that by a marvellous providence the human race should continue to be so equally divided into males and females, as to make this law expedient? It might have been quite otherwise for aught he knew except by revelation. Nevertheless, the perpetual adherence of one to the other,—a law not palatable to corrupt minds and manners, and which a superficial and sensual philosophy has sometimes dared to impugn,—this law, the wisdom of which is now generally approved, and which Jesus Christ has solemnly declared to be the Divine will, forbidding divorce on any ground save unfaithfulness to the marriage bed, was pro-

claimed by the first man at the instant of his first acquaintance with woman. Surely, surely, the Omniscient spake by his lips.

I can only glance at the interesting view of this subject opened by St. Paul, when he terms it "a great mystery;" meaning that the formation of Eve, and her marriage association with Adam, were typical of what takes place between Christ and the Church. As Eve was educed from Adam while he lay in a deathlike sleep, so is the Church from the pierced breast of the death-stricken Jesus. "Buried with Him by baptism into death," we rise from that hallowed grave, his life-giving person, become "members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones," to be moulded of God into vessels of glory. And God, after receiving us from Him, takes us back again, having first made us ready as a bride for the bridegroom; upon which the Saviour puts his name upon us in token of matrimonial fellowship, and binds himself by "an everlasting covenant" to make us the objects of his affectionate care,

the crown of his heavenly rejoicing. He who for our sakes left his Father's house, to seek and betroth us to himself in a land of strangers, will cleave to us, if we faithfully and lovingly attach ourselves to Him, with a constancy of love (as the Apostle assures us) that neither life, nor death, nor time, nor eternity, can destroy or impair.

What a beautiful spectacle were Adam and his wife on *this* day of paradise ! The eye of God himself rested upon them, and was pleased. For they had lost none of his likeness. They shone forth, worthy to be admired of angels, Adam with a glory derived from God directly, and his consort with that glory as communicated through her husband. Through him she had gotten those noble gifts which he had received immediately from God ; and in her they displayed themselves, like apples of gold through silver network, with a lustre, softened indeed, yet undiminished. What picture can we form to ourselves of human happiness more complete than was at first

presented by them ? "Naked" they are, but "not ashamed;" for the mantle of purity, innocence, and godliness, invests hem. We image them to ourselves as surpassing in all bodily and mental perfections and attractiveness any of their sons and daughters. How indeed should any of us, conceived and born in sin, come near to the godlike archetype, the model of human excellence, designed by the Almighty artificer. Every part of us is stamped with degradation. Ours is a "carnal mind," and a body of humiliation. But we picture the twain walking hand in hand, in all the beauty and dignity of goodness, through Eden's thornless garden,—still drinking in fresh knowledge, still inhaling sweeter joys, still sending up new praises to the benevolent Creator, and still finding additional reasons of thankfulness for the society each of the other. To their holy souls the service of God must have been perfect freedom. One positive law was laid upon them, and one only, as a test of their filial submission—

not to eat of a particular tree, which God's finger pointed out, but to beware of touching it. The result of that probation is the subject to be next considered.

## LECTURE III.

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### THE DAYS IN PARADISE.

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GENESIS III. 6.

"And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat."

We have gazed upon Paradise in the day of its brightness. Thus far it has been the abode of perfect righteousness, and therefore of perfect peace. "Great peace have they which love thy (God's) law, and nothing shall offend them." So long as Adam and his wife walked before God in the simplicity of loving obedience, they were inaccessible to grief of mind and

of body. But this sunshine is about to be overcast. From the bottomless pit a cloud is ascending, that shall speedily change it into dark and horrid night. That cloud is sin. Sin is now on the eve of entering into the world, and with it death. How indeed should death remain long away, after sin has entered ? For sin is separation from God, whose presence is life. In what manner this dreadful catastrophe took place is the subject for our consideration this morning : and may the Lord enable us so to consider it, as to become deeply alive to the blessed hope of recovering in the second Adam all that we have forfeited n and by the first.

Our first parents, it will be remembered, on being placed in the garden of Eden, had one positive commandment laid upon them. A *positive* is contra-distinguished from a *moral* law, inasmuch as it requires obedience, not on account of anything intrinsically good or evil in what it enjoins or forbids, but simply because such is the will of the

Superior. To love, and honour, and serve God is a moral duty : so is it likewise to injure nobody by word or deed. These are duties growing out of the natural relations in which we stand to God and to our neighbour. But the hallowing of one particular day of the week above any of the other days is not an original duty, to be deduced from our constitution and position. It owes its existence to the express command of God ; and is only therefore a duty because his word has made it so.

Such was the injunction laid upon Adam, and then upon his wife also, touching “the tree of knowledge of good and evil.” Of that tree,—whether a single one or a species we are not informed,—the human pair were forbidden to eat. And God, having fenced it about with his prohibition, to overleap that defence would be sin ; for “sin is the transgression of the law.”

Why this tree was denominated “the tree of the knowledge of good and evil,” is left open to conjecture. Probably it was

so named because designed for the test of our first parents' allegiance and dutifulness ; the result of which probation, if favourable, would be fraught with benefit to them ; if otherwise, with evil. But, however that may be, the fact is undoubted, that if, while conforming implicitly to God's orders, they were assured of his continued love, neither were they, on the other hand, left in doubt of the consequence of disobedience. The sanction of the law, that is, the punishment which was to ensue upon transgressing it, was declared in very solemn language : "In the day that thou eatest thereof (of the tree of knowledge), thou shalt surely die." Thus was added to those principles of love and reverence to their Father and Lord, by which they were to be habitually swayed, the strong motive of self-preservation, to assist them in holding fast that which was good, should an hour of probation arrive.

The hour of probation did arrive ; such was God's holy will. In his judgment it

is plain,—and to that judgment our reason consents,—the goodness which cannot endure a fiery ordeal counts for little. The gold which He desires to fashion into vessels of glory, is that which, after passing through the furnace, comes forth not merely sound and undimmed, but consolidated and refined. Saint Peter speaks of “the trial of Christian *faith*” as “being much more precious than of gold which perisheth, though it be tried with fire.” For that spiritual grace in the Lord’s approved ones is imperishable, and shall “be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ.”

Return we to our narrative. The woman, it would seem, is descried at a distance from her husband, but near to the tree of knowledge, (and the lesson couched in this circumstance I commend to your reflections) by a Being who lay in wait to destroy. What account we have of this lamentable transaction is given in a very concise form, and hence is obscure as to some, perhaps

unimportant, particulars. The Tempter we are told was the serpent. Now that a mere animal serpent could not have wrought the wickedness here related, we infer with certainty from the fact of its being irrational. The creature here brought to our notice is manifestly one of great intelligence and as great depravity. But elsewhere in Holy Scripture what this serpent was transpires : for Satan, the devil, is denominated by Jesus Christ, "a murderer from the beginning," and the father of lies ; and by the apostle John, "that old serpent which deceiveth the whole world." Nor can I hesitate to cite from the Author of the Book of Wisdom, a man familiar with the lore of the Hebrew Church, that "through envy of the devil came death into the world." This serpent then who ensnared our first mother, was the wicked one in a serpentine form, a being whose intellect was of superhuman range and grasp ; and of whom (called a serpent by Moses, because he lurked in the body, and

used the organs of that reptile) it might therefore be affirmed, *a fortiori*, that he “was more subtle than any (not ‘any other’) beast of the field, which the Lord God had made.” I cannot believe that the inspired writer penned this statement to explain why Satan chose that particular disguise in preference to any other bestial shape, since it really does not explain it. For why should Satan choose for his purposes the most sagacious of animals, even supposing serpents (which may well be disputed) to possess an advantage in that respect over the rest of the brute creation; since what he required was not an auxiliary mind, but simply a bodily vehicle through which to exert his own mind? Must we not think rather that the Holy Ghost meant to convey by implication, that this seducer was no real serpent, but some highly gifted, yet pre-eminently wicked, foe of God and man?

That such an adversary should have been permitted to steal into Paradise, there to

glut his vindictive malice for his own previous degradation by an attempt—too successful, alas,—to bring about the downfall of man, must for ever remain a mystery. It is among those deep things of eternity, which we touch not at all, or with trembling reverence. But it may check the scorner's gibe to be reminded, that, instead of indicating a want of fatherly care to his earth-born children on the part of the great God, this permission may have been a result of considerate tenderness. For will any one venture to maintain, that Adam and his partner, if left to themselves, would not have yielded sooner or later to the promptings of petulant appetites, and in concert have plucked the forbidden fruit? Now to have perpetrated such a deed of their own free motion would doubtless have been a more aggravated sin, than to fall into it, not of deliberate purpose and indigenous pride, but through the seduction of a most adroit deceiver, who took mean advantage of the woman's accidental isolation from

her husband. On the ground then of those extenuating circumstances it may be that God saw fit to compassionate fallen man, to modify the sentence of death passed upon him, and to raise a highway for his recovery. For no such grace was extended to the apostate angels, whose fall we have reason to think was not owing to any extraneous temptation, but originated in their own corrupt hearts.

Take we now a view of Satan's mode of dealing by the woman in his nefarious purpose of luring her from God. "Yea, hath God said (thus he accosts her) ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" There is extraordinary art in this opening address? He speaks as one astonished at the fact he inquires into : as reluctant to credit it, unless it should be confirmed by the woman. In the wily interrogation there is a volume of meaning. "You imagine yourselves, simple creatures that you are, most liberally treated by your Maker. But this is far from being the case, if He has

indeed interdicted you the enjoyment of a fruit, far the choicest in the garden. Surely, if He has acted thus, his sentiments towards you are not so paternal as you have fancied. He is jealous of you, and would not allow you to attain all the dignity and happiness of which your nature is capable. But if He is really the benevolent Being, the liberal dispenser you imagine, then doubtless you have misapprehended his orders. Never can He have meant to deny you such blessings as He knows would result from eating of the tree of knowledge." The woman replies at once ; and her answer is not one from which it can be certainly concluded that she was instantaneously infected with the poison which imbued the devil's guileful interrogation. On her betraying no alarm at being spoken to by what was apparently a beast of the field we make only this remark,—that it seems quite agreeable to the unlessoned simplicity, to the paradisaical innocence and fearlessness of our parents at this period

of their lives, to find nothing startling, perhaps nothing wonderful, in articulate language proceeding from brute as well as human lips.

The honest reply is: "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden, but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." How large the bounty of the Creator had been is here frankly told ; and the single limitation prescribed to what had otherwise been man's unlimited empire, there is no attempt to conceal, nor, I think, to exaggerate. That God should annex some bound to his donation, to prevent man from entertaining the conceit of his being an absolute irresponsible proprietor, was surely both wise and good, and perhaps indispensable to the maintenance of the Divine prerogative. Also, what we are debarred from actually indulging in, it is wise and gracious to forbid our venturing near to, our touching, tasting, handling. Up to

this moment when the insidious word is dropped, the seed of discontent injected; the man and woman appear never to have looked upon so trifling a restriction as a grievance. Neither does Eve's reply to the serpent prove *positively* (as we before noticed), that his venom had taken effect in her bosom. Yet dare we pronounce it improbable that it had ? For confessedly the thankless notion that we are wronged, unless all be given us, although little is withholden ; the rankling sense of a slight put upon us, until we are loosed from the bit and bridle of all coercion whatever;—this lust of independence so breaks out on every side, and is the root of such manifold evil, that one may believe the tempter to have been aware, that through no other door could sin be so readily let into the human heart. The very feeling that we possess *almost* all stimulates a burning eagerness to become possessed of *quite* all. Even our chiefest Benefactor seems penurious, if He keep back or redemand the least of what

we would fain account our own. Prone are we to charge Him, in thought if not in word, with illiberality, I had almost said injustice, if He decline making over to us, whose very being is his continued act, the property and lordship of the earth in all its fulness. Too commonly indeed we hardly thank Him for the grant of all besides that is gratifying to body or mind, if He deny us some one thing to which our appetite or fancy is drawn, and the more drawn perhaps to that particular object just because it *is* denied.

If some such emotions as I now allude to had begun to work in the bosom of our mother, that bosom was already tainted. And thus she is prepared to endure, instead of repelling with indignant warmth, the bold and impious speech next addressed to her by Satan : "Ye shall not surely die. For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as Gods (rather, "as God"), knowing good and evil." You perceive at

a glance the monstrous wickedness, yet exquisite guile, of the tempter. And if, as many think, he himself at the same moment devoured the fruit with an air of keen relish, and gave Eve to understand that not only was it free from deadly properties, but that he was indebted to it for improved understanding, and perhaps for the power of speech, then the force and subtlety of the temptation will be manifest. But how blasphemous this charge against the most High ! “ Ye shall not surely die.” Why the Holy One is branded as a liar ! God doth know (he adds) that in the day you take courage to eat of that tree, you shall become immeasurably wiser than before. A base envy, it is insinuated, was your Creator’s motive for the prohibition. Nor is the almighty ness of God obscurely disparaged, since it is intimated that He cannot execute his threats, nor counteract the pretended virtue of that particular fruit to raise the man and woman to a level with himself. “ Ye shall be as God.”

That so audacious a slander, so glaring a lie, should have won its way directly into the bosom of Eve may astonish us. But how rapid is the progress of an evil heart of unbelief, from the instant the seed of it is lodged within us, in bringing about a ruinous departure from the living God, and then making us the victims of a preposterous credulity! It was so in the instance before us. Already the woman has begun to reckon herself hardly used, or perhaps to argue that she must have mistaken either the command or the menace. So she listens to Satan's glozing speech, and half inclines to think him a better friend than God. She gives ear. Already the spirit of independence is working in her, and she will not go and consult her husband. She gazes on the tree, and behold it appears more beautiful and inviting than ever. That its fruit is of incomparable flavour the rich fragrance announces: besides which,—and this she accounts better than all, and a worthy

reason for desiring to taste it,—it is endued with the power of enlarging her faculties and knowledge, and of elevating her in the scale in creation, ay, in some sort to an equality with the most High. Here are inducements heaped one upon the other ; and her frailty is overcome. Having let go her humble, faithful, affectionate hold upon God, and resolved to go alone, walking in the imagination of her own heart, she is indeed left alone—to her tremendous cost, as she will soon discover. She takes of the tree and eats ; and in that instant is her own ruin sealed, though not that of Adam, nor of the future human race. But, alas, sin is eager to propagate itself. So to her husband she forthwith gives of this pernicious fruit ; and he, not deceived, but with his eyes open,—wrought upon (it may be) by her example and persuasion, or made desperate by the dread of losing her,—*he*, renouncing his allegiance to his Maker, eats also. By this act is the perdition of the world consummated. The wrath of

God settles upon it as a cloud. Man has made the fatal experiment whether he can do by himself, and find wisdom and happiness apart from God. He has chosen Satan for his guide instead of the Lord, and pleasure for his end instead of holiness. What the immediate results of this election were will be the subject of our next inquiry.

## LECTURE IV.

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### THE DAYS IN PARADISE.

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GENESIS III. 7.

“And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked.”

OUR first parents, so lately the glory of this world and the beloved of angels, because they bore the incorrupt image of their Maker, have fallen from that good eminence. Victims of Satan’s felon craft, they have bent under his yoke, have received his wages, have imbibed his spirit. In defiance of God’s command they have, at the instigation of the cruel tempter, eaten of the forbidden fruit, and his promise of their eyes being “opened” to know “good and evil” is fulfilled in a sense very

wide of their presumptuous hopes ; for their knowledge opens a door through which shame, amazement, and terror rush into their souls.

Before I say more on this part of my subject, let us revert for an instant to the tree of knowledge, and the menace with which God had accompanied his injunction to Adam to abstain from its fruit. "For (said He) in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Now this threat may appear, at first sight, to require that the very same sun which had seen the man and woman violate this order should witness their destruction. But since this event did not so occur, but the lives of both were extended to a long period afterwards, we have to look for some other explanation of the Divine threat. And this is found, without casting a shadow on the Divine veracity, in what actually took place. On that day, as we shall read hereafter, the sentence of death was passed upon Adam. He became dead in law. He was assured by the Al-

mighty's own mouth that his immortality was gone, and that his body should dissolve again into the dust out of which it had been taken. And from the moment he sinned there was lodged in his vitals,—perhaps through some property of the fruit he had rashly devoured,—a seed of corruption which still went on evolving, and producing more or less of infirmity, disease and pain, till the principle of life was forced out; after which the earthly tenement it had actuated mouldered away.

We now turn our thoughts to the first recorded consequence of transgression in Adam and his wife. “The eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked.” In the foregoing chapter we read not that they were ignorant of this fact, but only that they “were not ashamed.” What reason indeed had they to blush at being what God had made them, with nothing to disguise or conceal, because all was pure within and without? But the baneful fruit they had feasted upon had wrought

a sad change in their condition. Without perhaps, at the first, any clear or precise views of their altered position with respect to God, there is a fearful, torturing conviction that it is altered. A strange undefinable sensation, not wholly unreasonable, possesses them, of their wanting some cloak or dress before they can venture into the presence of their Maker. I see nothing but its prettiness to recommend the fancy, that originally their persons were invested with a sort of luminous mantle, such as angels may be supposed to wear, which faded from off them at the moment of their fall. But while free from self-reproach, for that they felt themselves to be what God made them and meant them to continue, all beauteous in his beauty, in his purity all pure, they entertained not a thought of standing before Him in any other guise. Now, however, sprang up in their bosoms, through the strange motions of appetite and passion and the outcries of disturbed conscience, a sentiment but faintly expressed

in their conceptions though grounded in truth, that without an interposing screen they could not confront the Majesty of heaven.

Let me explain a little more fully. In this account of the first man and woman becoming conscious of their naked plight, directly the fatal fruit was swallowed, and then plating for themselves a scanty vesture of fig-leaves, I seem to discern a conviction (shall we call it instinctive, or the offspring of God's Spirit ?) that if ever again they may draw near to their Maker with trustful love, it must not be as they are now in themselves, but with a something to intercept the stern inquisition of his justice. How shall we "stand before this holy Lord God," is the notion uppermost in their minds. And when Adam is soon afterwards required to say why he fled from the approach of God, his reply is ; "I was afraid,"—not *ashamed*, but *afraid*—“because I was naked.” There was in their minds a confused sense of danger resulting

from their nakedness, which danger it was hoped to avert by an adequate covering. That no such protection, however, was supplied by the flimsy manufacture, our erring parents' own invention, to which they had recourse, their attempt to hide their nudity more effectually among the trees, as soon as "the voice of the Lord God" was heard "walking in the garden," proves them to have known or suspected.

Now what our first parents saw dimly and at a distance, by the teachings of nature in part I conceive, and then by the clearer revelation of God's mercy, is brought near to our homes and our bosoms. Sin has indeed made us naked, unfit and unable for very shame and fear to encounter the eye of God. One of the characters ascribed by Christ to a fallen Church, that of Lao-dicea, was nakedness: "Thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and *naked*." We do indeed require a far better clothing than any that ourselves can devise or procure, to qualify us, wretched crea-

tures that we are, to sustain the Divine presence. Having lost the original comeliness of our nature, which consisted in its likeness to the Creator, we must obtain elsewhere, and be arrayed in, that which shall render us pleasing to the Divine eye, and shall hide the deformity we have contracted, or the doom of death will be ours. That raiment is the propitiatory righteousness of Christ. Wanting that, we are a spectacle of disgrace from which good angels turn away their eyes. But, having that, we can stand before God's tribunal and the assembled sons of light, and be neither ashamed nor afraid.

Have you not remarked how a guilty conscience pursued Adam with its scorpion lash from the hour in which he made God his enemy ? At once he becomes the victim of helpless terror. No longer does he go forth rejoicingly to meet his God and Father's evening visit. A day earlier, and to the inviting voice, "Seek ye my face," the affectionate answer of the happy pair

would have been, “Thy face, Lord, will we seek.” But now, notwithstanding they have aprons of leaves, the sound of God’s footsteps makes their hearts quiver with shame and consternation. They plunge into darkest shades, and search about for some hiding-place to crouch in, insane as the hope is of being able to elude those eyes which are as “a flame of fire.” But the vanity of such a hope,—if indeed they acted upon it, and did not rather not flee away in a paroxysm of unreasoning fright,—is not long in being shown. The terrible voice of God,—for to the sinner’s ear, before a Saviour has been revealed, it is most terrible,—re-echoes through the garden. “Adam, where art thou ? Where art thou, Adam ?” This summons Adam obeys at once, the vain thought of secrecy having died away the instant God’s voice was heard, although the command to come forth had not been directly uttered. But he feels himself surrounded by a terrible presence. He may as well return into the

light, for he is made sensible that he is as much exposed before the all-seeing One in the densest thicket, as he would be in the most open plain. This conviction comes upon our first parents the instant God enters into controversy with them. On the heart of each is vividly inscribed, as by the finger which wrote on Belshazzar's palace wall, that sentiment so forcibly expressed by the Psalmist ; "If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me, even the night shall be light about me."

Oh, how true is the Scripture doctrine, that "there is no darkness nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves." "The eyes of God are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." Of what avail then were it to meditate flight or lurking in secret places, when Omnipotence comes with its all-exploring glance to deal with us ? "Though they dig into hell, (says the Almighty) thence shall mine hand take them ; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I

bring them down." In the judgment-day, we are told, the wicked will strive to hide themselves in dens and in caves from the Judge's frown, and will implore rocks and mountains to fall upon them, if so they may be sheltered from his imminent wrath. But, as in Adam's case, the attempt will be fruitless. The shuddering sinner will be forced to confront his Judge ; and he will be in worse case than Adam, having despised that mantle of atonement to hinder his shame from appearing, which, when typically offered to the culprits in Paradise, was thankfully accepted.

Let me further remind you, that although we may not think of burying ourselves in woods or in caverns from God's piercing eye, there are many who do in another way make this preposterous and fatal attempt. They set themselves to forget God's presence. From their own hearts they veil their own transgressions, and their unpreparedness for judgment. They throw themselves among the trees,—to borrow a meta-

phor from our subject,—into places and societies whence God is excluded, with every thought of judgment and eternity, and then stupidly fancy themselves safe. But the infatuation cannot last. Called forth by a voice which can unstopp the deafest ear, they will perceive, to their everlasting confusion, that their spiritual nudity was concealed from themselves by an artificial blind, not from God by appropriate raiment.

Adam is now interrogated by God ; or rather, aware of the purpose for which he is summoned, he forthwith owns that fear, arising from a sense of his nakedness, had caused him to hide among the trees. By this confession he convicts himself of having eaten of the tree of knowledge. If Jehovah puts the question to him, “ Hast thou eaten of it ?” this cannot be for the purpose of ascertaining a fact of which the Interrogator is doubtful. It is only to lead to the inference, that man would never have had reason to blush for the one had he not

contracted guilt by the other. A shrinking, shivering sense of destitution, of wanting some cover to disguise and protect them, is unknown to those joyous creatures who feel themselves encompassed with God's "favour as with a shield." It was not so much the want of external garments as the dereliction of God's good Spirit, that caused the man and woman to experience an emptiness and a bareness, which they laboured in their ignorance—so little had the tree of knowledge done for them—to remedy by the futile expedients upon which we have animadverted.

When Adam is questioned as to his transgression of the law, his answer betrays a mind not a little damaged. Instead of manfully avowing the offence, and taking his full share of guilt,—a greater share in some respects than should be laid upon his partner, since he did it with his eyes open,—we find him palliating his own heinous fault by charging his wife with seducing him into it. "The woman whom thou

gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." And is there not more than a little of our forefather's temper in us, his children? How ready we are to excuse our own misdeeds at our neighbour's expense? How prone to satisfy ourselves that we are not *very much* to blame when we follow others in committing evil, provided we have not devised it? Brethren, I believe that it seldom goes far to extenuate our crime, that we have been overpersuaded by another to commit it. God did not gift each one individually with judgment and conscience, that we should suffer a neighbour to talk us over, and spur us on to what our judgment and conscience disallow. Indeed it is easy to imagine cases in which the tempted party may, through enjoying clearer light and lying under stronger obligations, be a vastly greater delinquent than the tempter.

Neither can we help noticing that Adam seems more than half inclined to throw the blame in a measure upon God. "The

woman that thou gavest to be with me, *she* gave me of the tree." But had God empowered her to guide and govern her husband ? Had He endowed her with an authority paramount to His own, so that she might revoke the Divine commandments, and loose what He had bound ? Our first father knew better than this ; and there is something akin to impiety in his way of almost reproaching the supreme Benefactor with his gift, just because his own faulty heart had turned that gift to bad account. Not to be his ruler, but his helpmate, had the woman been granted to him. On him, primarily, was the commandment laid. With him directly, and with her only as appertaining to him, was the covenant of salvation established. We must allow, therefore, that in Adam's apology, the incipient corruption of nature is manifested by a tone of complaint, not manly and kind towards his wife, not humble and dutiful towards the sovereign Disposer. In the woman's answer to God's demand, " What

is this that thou hast done," I find nothing to blame. It is a simple avowal of the melancholy fact, "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat." But, alas, how altered is the condition of the human pair! Instead of greeting God as a father, they are now faltering before Him as a judge. How is the fine gold of their godlike graces become dim! How is the glory faded that made them so lately fit companions for angels! There they stand awaiting the Judge's doom, in an agony of terror, if not in absolute despair.

Our inquiry into that doom must be deferred to another Lecture.

## LECTURE V.

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### THE DAYS IN PARADISE.

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GEN. III. 14, 15.

"And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field ; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life : and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed ; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

THE Lord God has appeared as the Creator of man ; He has appeared as the Father and friend of man ; He has appeared as the director and teacher of man : but now He comes forth in another form and attitude, sustaining the part of an accuser and a judge. What an event was this in Paradise ! Oh day of ineffable terror ! Was

not this a scene, was not this a transaction, to cover the face of heaven with blackness, and to make the whole creation begin that “groaning and travailing in pain together,” which will never cease until the vast process of redemption terminate in the glorious “manifestation of the sons of God !”

Now then the Almighty is seated on the tribunal of justice. In what form He appeared we are not informed ; nor whether any other beings besides the Judge himself were visible to the parties arraigned. Yet great likelihood there is that angels, who had been spectators of the creation, and had hailed the coming in of a new race of creatures stamped with the Divine image, were now visibly present at God’s judicial proceedings with the several criminals. Well might they be summoned to witness how He dealt by the seducer and the seduced ; how He mingled mercy with judgment ; how He asserted his own truthfulness and the honour of his law ; how He distinguished, in his sentence, between the

malignant falsifier and his unwary dupes. Doubtless the ways of God were vindicated from the first to heavenly intelligences ; although much was still left obscure even to them, which they earnestly “ desired to look into,” and which declared itself only as the marvellous scheme of Christian grace unfolded.

The first party called to the bar is Satan. The seducer’s doom is first pronounced. You heard it in the verses I have taken for my text. And possibly the words in which his sentence is couched might seem to a hasty reader to announce nothing beyond a degradation of the reptile. My persuasion is, however, that it does not announce that at all. In a former lecture I hinted some reasons for concluding that when the serpent is named as remarkable for subtlety, it is the inspired writer’s purpose to indicate, not the distinctive property of the animal, but the singular cunning which is characteristic of that wicked Spirit, who wound himself into the con-

fidence of our unguarded mother. So here I conceive that God is not dealing at all with the irrational and innocent beast, which was Satan's tool, but with that artificer of fraud himself and alone ; although for various reasons He calls him a serpent, and clothes the penal sentence passed upon him in tropes which suit the brutal form in which the arch-traitor is still embodied. Accordingly I discard the notion, as fanciful and idle, that serpents were originally of loftier shape and carriage than they are now-a-days, but were reduced by the Divine malediction to trail along the ground, instead of going erect, and thence to lick up their dusty meal. In the judgment pronounced upon him I believe Satan to be addressed in terms of cutting sarcasm, just as if he were the very brute, whose form he had feloniously used for the mask and the mean of his impious project. "Thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field." Thou hast assumed the shape, and abused the organs of a humble

reptile. Lo, thou shalt be far more degraded. Does *it* go on its belly, exposed to the spurn and the stamp of every foot ? Thou shalt be trodden under the feet of thy seeming victims. Does *it* feed on dust and gravel ? Thy meat and drink shall be the foulest humiliation ; and a self-corroding heart shall make thine existence a perpetual wretchedness.

Remark the goodness of Jehovah in dealing first with the deceiver ; since thereby He opens at once “a door of hope” to the deceived. Had He begun with them, they would in all probability have been utterly overwhelmed. Even now, with what fainting hearts and trembling limbs must they have stood before a jealous and injured sovereign ! But, wrapt up in the denunciation upon Satan is unspeakable consolation to hapless man. “I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed.” For in these words it is plainly implied, that by no instant or speedy death are the two delinquents to

be cut off. They are to live and have offspring. "Enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and *her seed*."

Now can any one fancy that the common serpent is here accosted ? Is it true that particular hostility obtains between mankind and that reptile ? Is not man's antipathy to the scorpion quite as mortal ; and are not tigers and wolves fiercer and more terrible enemies to man ? Indeed it seems hardly consistent with the reverence we owe to the most High, to suppose that He would enunciate a fact, or pronounce a sentence like this (taking the words in their literal sense), with a solemnity that seems to require a much weightier subject. For very inconsiderable is the annoyance occasioned us by serpents, in comparison with many other causes of misery. I therefore feel assured that to Adam and Eve it was granted to know undoubtedly, that none other than the spiritual Malefactor himself, who had wrought them such cruel wrong, was here

denounced. Mark the words recorded, and then judge of their true sense. God says, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed." Satan doubtless accounted himself vastly the stronger. No fear for him, a "son of the morning," from creatures fabricated of dust. Surely they will henceforth submit to him unresistingly. But, no, thou prime author of all subtlety and all mischief, God will excite and enable them to withstand thee. He will render the man, ay, the feebler woman, a match for thee, and an overmatch. For enmity shall subsist between thee and her, and between thy seed and her seed. To the fruit of her womb it shall be transmitted; and that which is born of her, however thou mayest bruise his heel, shall do thee infinitely greater hurt, for upon thy head, the seat of life, He shall inflict a mortal bruise.

That Satan understood enough of this sentence to be thenceforth the victim of

torturing anticipations I cannot doubt. We know that when Jesus Christ came into this world,—and *He* was, beyond a question, the foretold “seed of the woman,” so named emphatically because he was to have no human father,—Satan acted like Herod, and showed that his mind was in an agony lest his kingdom should be rent from him by this mysterious Person. In the depths of his bosom lay evermore the sentence of his doom, not as a dead letter, an inert supine thing, but as a living fiery serpent, a never-dying worm. Therefore hardly has the Captain of our salvation taken the field, ere his vigilant antagonist sets upon him, and commences that mortal fight which he knows must be fought, and in which defeat must be his perdition.

But if the apostate discerned enough of the meaning of this prediction to be racked with keen forebodings, the man and his wife had a sufficient insight into it to be cheered and comforted. They were re-

prieved, they were "saved in hope," although the way of salvation was discovered to them but dimly and in shadow. We, brethren, apprehend it better. God be praised that we can read and dwell upon the prophecy, not as one that is yet to be verified, but as already fulfilled in the person and work of Messiah. We understand in what sense the heel of one combatant, and the head of the other, suffered. The human nature of the God-man was indeed rudely handled by the serpent-fiend. In many ways besides those recorded in the Gospels may the Blessed One have suffered from diabolical agencies, and his walk through life have been made painful and dark. Any how we are assured that Satan, after being foiled in the several machinations by which he had hoped to find some weak point in the Redeemer's holy soul, was the prime instigator of the Jewish priests and of Judas to that series of persecutions, which concluded in the atrocities of Pilate's judgment-hall, and of Calvary. Still this was only bruising the

heel. It was not destruction, not even discomfiture, to the Redeemer. Nay, it was what Satan can never have foreboded, the very means whereby his own head was effectually crushed. Had Satan brought sin into the world ? Christ's atoning blood purchased the remission of sin. Had Satan made a highway for death to enter into the world ? Christ Jesus by the power of his resurrection, introduced life and immortality. Did Satan cause the Holy Ghost to forsake the world ? Christ has sent Him down again to abide with us for ever. Were the gates of hell opened by Satan for mankind? Our victorious Lord has thrown open the gates of heaven. In short, the stratagems of the devil have recoiled upon himself. In the conflict with the seed of the woman, he has been utterly vanquished ; has been put to shame, and sunk into a deeper damnation than before. While striving to upset man's happiness, he occasioned its being placed on a new and firmer basis. While plotting to overreach

God, and rob Him of his subjects, he outwitted himself, and became the instrument of a more glorious empire accruing to the Almighty than was originally planned, inasmuch as “the last Adam” is a greater and better being than the first, “the Lord from heaven” than a creature taken out of the ground.

In discussing the sentence on Adam and Eve we must tread our ground with a rapid step. The woman, as being the first in transgression, is the first to hear her doom. It is as follows : “I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception ; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children ; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.” Now, how has this sentence been executed ? The first part of it, as appears to me, by the augmented fecundity of the woman ; “I will multiply, not by sorrow only, by adding labour and sorrow to the act of parturition, but *thy conception* also.” Had sin and death been unknown, far fewer children, I suspect,

would have been given to each human pair ; else must the earth have been quickly overpeopled, unless means of thinning it, not revealed to us, entered into the Creator's plan. Now, however, constituted as the world is, and especially as disordered by sin, indescribable misery grows out of an excessive population in many regions. Now, too, the woman conceives many times, when no offspring follows to repay the uneasiness connected with pregnancy ; and with child-birth come pain and peril, and sometimes death.

Observe, further, how God adapts the penalty to the offence. Eve had desired to be as God, by possessing a knowledge of good and evil, in the hope, no doubt, of thus being able to avoid by her own unassisted power, all evil mental and bodily. But, what is the result of this ungodly attempt ? She brings upon herself, by God's righteous decree, those very evils, anguish of mind and body, and a life of anxiety and care.

She would fain be even as God ; therefore she shall sink below the man. She craves to be independent of her Maker, and of her husband ; and she is henceforth obliged to lean upon the partner of her life far more deferentially and submissively than was prescribed by the original law of their union. And we are aware that in many countries,—more in others than in this, although here indeed not a little,—the superior strength and authority of the husband are cruelly exerted.

On Adam's doom, the last pronounced, my observations must be very limited. He had listened to the voice of one whom it was his duty to lead, not to follow. Overcome by conjugal fondness, no doubt, and perhaps not unwilling to acquire a knowledge and power that should exempt him from the task of keeping the garden, he disobeyed God, and on him fell also a condign punishment. Henceforth he is abased to the condition of a slave of the soil, and shall thence extort a painful sub-

sistence. Instead of living on fruit-trees, that pour into his lap their ready and luscious produce, his principal food shall be "the herb of the field,"—corn and roots laboriously obtained by the sweat of his brow. For the ground was "cursed" for man's sake, converted into an instrument of penance. The fiery breath of Almighty wrath went over it, and drank up its nourishing juices, so that now it was rendered hard of tillage and comparatively unproductive. After the flood, indeed, it appears to have been relieved of this curse to a great extent: nevertheless it still brings forth thorns and thistles more readily than wholesome plants.

Adam was to eat his bread in sorrow. And is it not so still with his children? What numbers of us inherit largely that sad patrimony, and are barely able with all their toil to earn a scanty livelihood for their households!

Unhappy man, how degraded and chastised! His kingly crown is fallen from his

head : his domain is taken from him : and justly too, since he has revolted from the King of heaven, to whom homage and service are due. Ah, what must have been his feelings when Sin in all its voluminous magnitude stared him in the face, so pregnant with woes to himself, so hateful to God's majesty and goodness.

Still mercy enters into his sentence. For steady labour is generally requisite for the bodily health of our distempered persons, and still more for their mental health. Is not sloth the parent of disease and vice ? And what would society be, what a scene of abomination and misery, were not people forced to spend a large proportion of their time in getting food and raiment !

One word more. Adam hears that he shall return to the ground whence he had been taken. " Yes, proud as thou art, and aspiring to Deity, thou art still but dust ; and into dust again shall that goodly structure of thine dissolve." Such were the closing words of the awful judgment.

Hardly could our lapsed parents have survived the shock of such a doom, but for the precious intimation of a plan for their recovery. But the seed of a glorious hope is sown in their hearts, to preserve them from being utterly withered by a perception of the terrible losses and evils they had wantonly incurred. On the nature of that hope we shall discourse in the next and concluding Lecture.

## LECTURE VI.

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### THE DAYS IN PARADISE.

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GENESIS III. 20.

"And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living."

THE judgment of the several delinquents is ended. How much of mercy was blended with justice in the dealings of Jehovah with the human pair came before us in our last lecture. But it seems beyond a question that the remedial scheme, conceived by Almighty love in behalf of sinful man, was more fully disclosed to Adam than is shewn in the concise notice which the Bible takes of these proceedings. That he did understand to a great extent the cheering part of the sentence pronounced, may

be safely inferred from the passage which follows close upon it. Viewed in opposition to the last clause of that sentence, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," the next verse, which is our text this morning, becomes very noteworthy. There was no misunderstanding words like these : "Thou shalt die, O man, for thine impious daring, thou that didst aspire to be as God ; and that body of thine shall be spoiled of all its vigour and comeliness, and shall crumble into its original dust." We may be certain, I say, that Adam comprehended the terrible force and extent of this sentence. But did he take it to imply that he should perish for ever ; should be annihilated ? Assuredly not. The hope that had been kindled in his breast shines out in the very first words we hear him uttering afterwards. In those words he gave his wife a most significant name. He called her Chayah, or Eve, as it is in our translation. The word is Hebrew, and the English of it is Life. Yes, truly, though

God has announced death to Adam as his irrevocable doom, He has not announced the extinction of his being, thereby placing an impassable gulf between him and future happiness. The man must undergo his sentence. Of death he shall be the temporary prey, but he shall not die eternally. His heel, not his head, shall be bruised. Nay more, a highway shall be thrown up for him—such is the Divine benevolence—whereby he may attain a life of immortal blessedness. And this Adam clearly understood was to be through “the seed of the woman.” *Her son*,—for a male offspring is denoted by the gender of the pronoun,—a son of hers shall arise to vanquish the devil, to abolish death, and to bring “life and immortality to light.”

Now who can doubt that Adam had his thoughts fixed on this redemption from death and destruction by the promised seed of the *woman*, when he put upon her the name of *Life?* It would have been a trivial act and one of paltry meaning, if, instead of

being what I deem it, an eminently religious act, it merely signified that she was the root whence the human race should issue ; that all future men and women might be said to be primarily the fruit of her body. In this sense Adam might as properly have taken the name to himself, since he was in like manner to be the father of all future men and women ; and every subsequent generation would be traced up to his loins. But we may safely conclude that Adam was now re-animating his own heart and his partner's—(and hers especially, breaking under the thought of her having been first in the transgression, would need to be thus revived)—with the reflection that if with her began death, so also shall life be restored through her ; and that if by her eating the forbidden fruit sin entered into the world, so also by the fruit of her womb shall righteousness enter in. In short, our first father may have changed his wife's name from *Isha*, which means woman, into

*Chavah*, which means life, on purpose to avouch his grateful acceptance of the oracle, that she is now in a mysterious manner betrothed to the most High, whose miraculous energy shall cause her, or one of her daughters, to become the mother of a Saviour, through whom, where sin had previously reigned unto death, grace shall reign through righteousness unto life eternal. And if these suppositions are well founded, then we recognize in this act of Adam's respecting his wife's name, following close as it seems to have done upon the denunciation of bodily death, a prophetic assurance of salvation by one who should be emphatically *a woman's offspring*, —an assurance of the resurrection of the body, as well as of new and spiritual life imparted to the soul.

The point next to be considered is one of no slight interest. Our first parents, you remember, had no sooner committed the fatal trespass, than, becoming conscious of their nakedness, they set about conceal-

ing it with flimsy dresses woven of fig-leaves. For this poor and inadequate contrivance God substitutes the skins of animals. "Unto Adam also and to his wife (I quote the words of Moses) did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them." This follows immediately upon what may be called Adam's profession of faith in the expected restorer of life, the woman's wondrous progeny, on which subject I have just enlarged. Can we then be rebuked as the dupes of fancy rather than the scholars of reason, if we look upon this as a religious mystery not less than a physical benefaction ? Garments were needed indeed ; but they might have been fabricated of other materials. Why then did Jehovah choose skins ? As it seems improbable that any beasts had hitherto died a natural death, and animal food was not yet granted to man, one cannot well rest in any other conclusion, than that from animals slain to be afterwards consumed upon an altar before God were those skins

obtained. Now such religious oblations are called sacrifices ; which singular mode of worship the Almighty seems to have ordained (for who can think it a human invention ?) for the express purpose of representing the just punishment of sin, together with the way of removing it from sinners, determined in his merciful counsels, by the substitution of an innocent victim in place of the guilty. Accordingly, from the passage of Scripture now under consideration I infer that this institution followed close, as in the nature of things might be expected, on the delivery of that judicial sentence, in which, while the retribution of the law was confirmed, the remedy of the gospel was indicated. From the instant God saw fit to declare his purpose of combining mercy with justice to the transgressors, it was expedient that the proposed manner of effecting this great object, so as not to dishonour but to glorify his own perfections, should be more or less clearly foreshadowed. As therefore the fig-leaves

were resorted to by man in his endeavours to cover himself from Divine wrath, of which endeavours the futility was now exposed ; so, on the other hand, the clothing made of the skins of immolated beasts was eloquent of the fact, that in that true sacrifice, of which those animals were types and figures, would be found the true interposing defence between helpless sinners and the just Avenger.

The next two verses call for some remark. They are as follows : “ And the Lord God said, Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil : and now lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever. Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground whence he was taken.” “ The man is become as one of us,”—one of the persons in the adorable Trinity,—“ to know good and evil.” By some persons this speech, from the mouth of Jehovah, is regarded as a bitter irony ; in which case the senti-

ment, divested of its sarcastic form, might be thus expressed. "That poor creature, man, has utterly failed in the attempt to become knowing of good and evil as God is. In essaying to climb up to heaven, he has fallen back into the dust." But, however true this assertion would be, I question whether it be designed in the words we are reviewing. My impression is that they are meant to imply that man, in trying to be as God, had become so far altered from his native constitution, as to have actually, though most unhappily, acquired perceptions of *evil* as the opposite of *good*, through the principle of sin now brought into his bosom, and there waging war with his better knowledge and his conscience. He would, he could no longer be a dutiful and affectionate child, walking simply before God in all perfectness ; but he would be the wretched subject of intestine strife between the law of sin newly planted in his members, and the law of righteousness still uneffaced from his mind. Miserable man,

what so much to be henceforth coveted as a renovation of his depraved soul into the image of his Maker! But that renovation was only to be consummated through death. And therefore he shall be prevented eating of the tree of life, the fruit of which appears to have been endued by God's ordinance with the virtue of perpetuating existence. God will indeed leave the tree in Paradise; and that, I conceive, because it possessed a mystical sanctity, from being ordained a type of the saving Cross, or of Him who hung thereon. Nevertheless, that tree itself is no longer to be the instrument of sustaining life. Man shall now obtain life and immortality by faith in the Antitype,—in the tree which God would plant, in “the fulness of time,” upon Mount Calvary “for the healing of the nations.”

We have reached the sad hour when Adam and Eve were expelled from Paradise. Wishing to be exalted above measure—above the measure of God's holy will, and of what suited the dependent estate of

creatures,—they sank down from the place of favoured children to that of servants and strangers. What an exemplary consequence of undutifulness and pride! What a tremendous confirmation is here exhibited of that notable saying, that “whoso presseth into light shall be oppressed with splendour.” Whoever would force himself with godless ambition above the station he is bidden of God to fill, courts the thunderbolts of destruction : whereas the pathway to heaven is obedience and humility.

God turns man out of the Garden of delights, a place congenial to innocence and goodness, but not to a nature in which appetite and passion have gained the mastery over conscience. Right and good it is for Adam, the transgressor, to be transferred to a very different sphere, where, instead of having nourishment provided for him freely, he may get it laboriously. His destination is to till the ground, that ground, it is expressly added, “ whence he was taken.” Solemn thoughts, my brethren,

yet salutary ones, would visit him when employed in this labour. He could hardly spend his hours in working the ground, without reflecting that, as thence he sprang, and extracted thence the sustenance of his body, so also he had incurred the doom of returning thither by death ; yet with the consolatory prospect of reviving like a plant, which, after undergoing corruption and decay, breaks forth again into life and vigour and beauty and fruitfulness.

We come to inquire lastly, what was meant by placing cherubim at the entrance of the garden. This is generally thought to have been designed to preclude the man from visiting Paradise, and there feeding on the tree of life. To this opinion I, however, cannot subscribe. That angelic flames of fire should have been requisite to hinder the heart-broken culprits from an attempt to wrest the boon of immortality from that mighty hand, which had just refrained from taking their forfeited lives, appears to me all but incredible. Good reason there

is to think that Adam and Eve, deeply penitent for their offence, strove thence-forward to approve themselves to God by a life of faith upon the dawning Gospel ; nor required the brandished weapons of cherubim to deter them from a second invasion of what God had inhibited. I am far more inclined to look upon all this apparatus and procedure as a commencement of the evangelical dispensation. The sword-like flame,—for so I would translate what is rendered “flaming sword” in our Bibles—I believe to be the Shechinah, or symbol of God’s presence. Not swords are mentioned, still less swords in the hands of angels, but one sword, or spiral flame, a pointed and luminous column. Now, if this stood near the tree of life, which may have formed a sort of background to it, we discern the reason of its being said to have “kept the way” to that tree. Indeed, I am prone to surmise that the two in juxtaposition, the celestial flame and the life-giving tree, constituted a wonderful and

most significant symbol of the God-man, Christ Jesus, the former representing his Deity, the latter his manhood, while in the two combined we recognise “ Immanuel, God with us.”

All this, I repeat, seems designed to keep up the expectation of a signal deliverance. Adam and Eve are now obnoxious to death; they shall not retain their present life for ever. Yet they shall know that the way of life eternal is kept open to them, a highway of God’s own preparing. Resorting to this hallowed spot with sacrifices and prayers, and gazing on these marvellous objects,—the heavenly blaze and the heavenly ministers, with the tree of life full in view although no longer accessible,—they would feel strengthened to complete their mortal pilgrimage through a blighted and curse-stricken world. God be praised that when Paradise ceased to be the residence of sinful man, it was forthwith erected into a type of the Church, with its host of friendly angels, and with “ Jesus the Medi-

tor of the new covenant." And that type proclaims that, constrained though we be to accept the evil doom entailed upon us by the first Adam, yet are we already ransomed and reconciled by our second and far better federal Head, and possess in Him the blessed hope of a complete and everlasting salvation.

THE END.

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